

Abstract of the Disclosure

An Internet server matches experts offering consulting services in the biological sciences or the like with potential customers of such consulting services. The server presents each expert with a Web interface through which the expert inputs his or her qualifications and times of availability. The qualifications are organized in a two-tier hierarchy of broad subject areas and sub-areas within each area. The times of availability are organized in terms of starting time of availability and duration of availability from that starting time. The server also presents each customer with a Web interface through which the customer inputs the qualification and times of availability sought. The qualifications and times are organized in the same fashion as for the expert. The customer can input multiple service requests, each with different qualifications and times of availability. The server uses the input data to match experts with customers. At first, the experts and the customers are anonymous to one another. Once either an expert or a customer chooses to purchase the record concerning a match, the record with contact information is released, and the expert and the customer can contact each other. The server provides other functions, such as allowing a physician to contact a manufacturer or a product, using only the brand name of that product; allowing companies to conduct surveys of physicians; and providing distance learning.